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# Get tough on travellers

I am sick of hearing about the supposed plight of the people who are due to be evicted from Dale Farm, the country's largest unauthorised travellers' site, in Essex (Metro, Fri).

They represent a massive drain on public resources, flagrantly helping themselves to what others have worked hard for, and yet they contribute absolutely nothing in taxes.

They destroy whole areas of the community, leaving them devastated so others have to clear up their mess. They act as though they are above the law, carrying out blatant criminal activity with a sense of entitlement because it is 'their way', and yet they expect to be protected.

The simple fact is, they know what they are doing is wrong and now they are upset because they are being made to stop their damaging and antisocial behaviour.

Julian Self, Buckinghamshire

For the expected £18million cost of evicting travellers from Dale Farm, Basildon Council could buy a plot of land, plant thousands

of trees on it and give it to the people of the town – a green-belt land swap. Or it could use it to break up a tight-knit community, make families homeless and traumatise children.

The only people who will benefit from this impending eviction are the bailiffs, the lawyers and those with prejudices.

Andrew Reid Wildman, Essex

I don't understand how the removal of 400 travellers from Dale Farm can be allowed. These people own the very land they are being evicted from.

It may be green-belt land but surely Basildon Council should realise that the cost of this farce could be much better spent elsewhere.

How can it see fit to break up a community that has lived this way for ten years?

What would happen if councillors and their neighbours, friends and family were forcibly removed from their neighbourhood?

It would be much better for everyone if the travellers were simply left alone.

SK, Berkshire



Time's up: Travellers at Dale Farm in Essex are to be evicted Picture: Getty

## Politics is in need of new blood

AG criticised young Tory councillor Jodie Jones, who posted photos of her exploits of Facebook, and said people should spend some time in the real world before becoming councillors (Metro, Thu).

I would argue that being a councillor is very much about the 'real world' and helping residents with 'real' problems.

I was elected as a Liberal Democrat councillor aged 28 (some years ago now) and brought some imagination to the role. I did 'surgeries' in the busy local supermarket rather than the empty community hall, put out regular newsletters for residents and did a monthly walk around my ward, looking for things that needed fixing.

I pushed for residents to be allowed to speak at council meetings and persuaded the council to use recycled paper. None of this would have happened had it been left to my older colleagues. I did all this while having a full-time job. I even managed to get to the occasional party and nightclub.

We are from different political parties but I wish Ms Jones all the best in her work. Politics needs more young blood, not less.

Richard Ormerod, Co Durham

## A solution for obesity

Several writers have suggested that people on benefits cannot afford to buy fresh food, leading to an obesity epidemic (Metro, Fri).

To overcome this, I suggest benefits should be provided in the form of coupons for healthy food and other basic needs. Any rent, electricity, gas and water bill allowances should then be paid directly to councils and relevant companies and landlords.

This would also help ensure the



welfare system is not abused and only those in real need are given benefits. It would also help with many other social problems Britain is facing.

Desd, London

## Stop the exploitation

It is sad that Yvonne, the dairy cow that escaped from a Bavarian farm in May, will now be left to roam without any help in the forests (Metro, Tue). However, the real tragedy is that we are treating very animals in the first place.

The production of meat, dairy and eggs is totally unnecessary and causes animal suffering. Animals used to make milk and eggs live longer than 'meat' animals and are arguably treated worse.

Dairy cows, such as Yvonne, are continually impregnated to produce milk. They become traumatised every time their calf is removed. These unnatural pregnancies cause them excruciating udder infections.

Those of us who sympathise with Yvonne's plight should become ethical vegans. Nobel prize winner Dr Albert Schweitzer said: 'It is man's sympathy with all creatures that makes him truly a man.'

MR, Newcastle



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Thank you to the LUL staff, BTP officers and ambulance staff who took care of me when I was taken ill at Victoria station on Thursday morning.

Noreen, London

Thank you to the train guard and driver on the 18.02 from Victoria for doing their best to keep us informed of the incident at Thornton Heath. Hopefully we'll have reached our destination by

her boyfriend for giving me, a complete stranger, a lift to Derby station when the last bus from Ashbourne broke down.

Steve, Yorkshire

Thank you Vicky for brightening up my week by inventing your own quiz show for me to play, complete with xylophone musical interludes.

Jack, Bristol

Thanks to my wife, Jan, for coming home after

Nemi has just got on my train. With attitude. I'm scared.

Wimp, West Sussex

Have I got larger or have Weetabix got smaller?

Mike, London

Update on the 'pinch, punch, first of the month'. Apparently it's not unacceptable but just expect a slap and a kick for your troubles.

Bhavini, London

Curious, unfortunately I can't send you a photo of

same navy blue coat both Kylie and Pippa wore the other day.

Russ, Nottingham (via Long Eaton)

Did anyone else immediately rush to buy One Day after Bookworm's comment? It had better change my life now.

Kess, Sheffield

Why do shops bring lovely fruit and veg from around the world and then display them on the street to be bathed in toxic traffic fumes?

Ginny, Manchester

have smelly, unwashed hair?

Jackie, Liverpool

Ellen, someone will have the answer to your question, believe you me.

Mouse, Merseyside

I love you Metro but your ink just ruined my crisp white shirt this morning.

Aphisa, London

Becky, carry on doing your make-up on the train. It gives me something to watch on the boring commute.

Mul, Leeds

make-up on the bus or train. Is that strange?

Steve, Birmingham

My husband is still using the same dressing gown he had when I met him 36 years ago. Is this a record?

Bobby, Essex

Graham, I'm reading One Day and I'm bored. I keep waiting to get to the part where I'll understand why everyone is so crazy about it.

Sofia, via text

People who use laptops on trains are not important.